



pRide



FALL 2000

THE NEWSLETTER BY AND FOR

RHODE ISLAND STATE EMPLOYEES

Dr. Carl to Direct Diversity Initiative



Governor Almond has appointed **Robert L. Carl, Jr., Ph.D.** to direct a Diversity Initiative, which is designed to integrate more ethnic and gender balance into the state employment system. Armeather Gibbs, a top aide to Governor Almond, will serve as the Governor's liaison.

Dr. Carl stresses that the Administration's goal is to meet the state government's future workforce challenges. Dr. Carl pointed out some steps the Administration has taken to demonstrate the importance placed on integrating Diversity Management into every function of state government:

- The Administration employed the services of a professional, internationally known diversity consultant, to guide the course of this Initiative.
- The Governor appointed a Diversity Advisory Counsel with broad oversight on personnel initiatives in Rhode Island State Government.
- "As Director, I have created a new office of Human Resource, Outreach & Diversity (HROD), converting from a Recruitment & Placement operation to a workforce planning strategy," said Dr. Carl.
- HROD will streamline its operation by incorporating technology and reflecting a 21st century methodology.
- HROD has created an online vacancy notification system with the Department of Labor and Training and will further perfect this process in the HR-Management Information System, which is currently under development.
- HROD created an automated Talent Bank, to insure that qualified referrals are made to respond to agency needs and an applicant's interest in securing gainful employment.
- HROD strengthened partnerships with internal and external agencies for improving recruitment and selection.

These are but a few of the areas we are working on, with much more to come.



State of Rhode Island Diversity Vision Statement

Diversity is the fair and equitable recognition and acknowledgement of individual differences. The State of Rhode Island is committed to building a competitive and diverse workforce where the best people are hired, retained and allowed to flourish. We will create equitable, fair and inclusive employment practices that will support a diverse and efficient workforce that will be reflective of and more responsive to the citizens that we serve. We will work to further improve and strengthen our workforce by aggressively focusing on the recruitment and retention of current and future employees of color, women and individuals with disabilities. We expect to provide equitable treatment for all regardless of gender, race, age, culture, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, language, socioeconomic class, education, and family status.

Governor Launches Diversity Initiative



September, 2000

To State of Rhode Island Employees:

Over the next several years, we have an opportunity to create a new state government workforce, that is more reflective of the diversity of Rhode Island citizens. To achieve this goal, I have launched a comprehensive initiative to expand outreach and recruitment and develop programs to improve the professional development of state employees.

As a result of a consolidation of the state workforce under my administration, there have been a limited number of state job openings over the last five years. That will change when nearly one-third of the state employees become eligible for retirement over the next five to seven years. To build and maintain a skilled workforce, the state must seek applicants from all backgrounds and career experiences.

To achieve this goal, an Office of Outreach and Diversity has been established within the Human Resources Division of the Department of Administration. I have also called on the Department of Labor and Training to dedicate a staff member at each of its netWORKri offices to assist clients interested in state employment. Working in partnership with netWORKri, the Office of Outreach and Diversity will create a database of people seeking state employment, linking candidates to positions, as they become available. The state also plans to conduct surveys to determine what impediments may be preventing current employees from taking advantage of advancement opportunities or keeping other qualified individuals from entering state service.

To keep state government competitive, we must give supervisors the tools they need to become more effective managers. Through the creation of a Management Development Institute under the direction of the Office of Training and Development, supervisors will develop and enhance their leadership skills through management seminars. To give state workers the direction they need to better serve the public, we are also instituting a system of annual employee performance evaluations, beginning with pilot programs in the Office of the Governor and within the Department of Environmental Management.

We have begun an important process to create a competitive and diverse state workforce in which the best people are hired, retained and encouraged to achieve their fullest potential. I firmly believe in this process and would appreciate your support and participation in this important endeavor. Together, we can create the type of state government employees and Rhode Island citizens want and deserve.

Sincerely,

LINCOLN ALMOND
Governor



FROM THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

Executive Orders

- 00-7 6-22-00** Northeast Interstate Compact Commission
- 00-8 6-22-00** Governor's Telecommunication Task Force Membership
- 00-9 6-28-00** Growth Planning Council Membership
- 00-10 7-13-00** Waiver of entrance fees at state beaches on Bay Day
- 00-11 8-03-00** Employee Performance Evaluation Program

For more information or copies of Executive Orders, call the **Office of the Executive Counsel, 222-2050, Ext. 258.**

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The State of Rhode Island is an equal opportunity and diversity employer and reasonable accommodations will be provided. For assistance, call EEO Office at 222-3990. (TDD 222-6144).

Human Resources, Outreach and Diversity (HROD)

is strategically focused on the Diversity objectives.

What does HROD do:

- **Workforce Planning**
- **Diversify State Government's Workforce**
- **Policy & Program Review to Insure a Fair & Equitable Workplace**
- **Direct a Public Awareness Program to Educate the Workforce on the Benefits of Diversity Management for Reasons of Business Necessity**

Meet the Staff

Beverly A. Dwyer, Human Resource Program Administrator, is a 31-year veteran in Rhode Island State Government. Beverly spent half of her career serving three governors in the Executive Department and the balance of her career in the Department of Administration and Human Resource Administration. Beverly is known for her advocacy in civil rights and pay equity in the community. She authored laws, executive orders, and publications that demystify the Rhode Island State Government bureaucracy, promote equality, and educate the workforce on principles of human resource administration and the dynamics of state government.

Victor Mendoza, a State Recruitment Officer, is a leader in the minority community, who headed the State's Recruitment and Placement Office for 13 years. To his credit, he helped state government officials identify qualified personnel for State opportunities. His efforts resulted in Rhode Island State Government closing the gap on the representation of minorities and women as well as helping to place qualified people in state government. Victor is active in many community organizations.

Pamela Goralnik, Personnel Aide, came to the Personnel Office from Rhode Island College with the highest accolades from President John Nazarian. President Nazarian said, "RIC's loss proved to be Personnel's gain." Also, Pam is a veteran of 28 years state service, primarily functioning in personnel, fiscal and technological areas. In her new assignment with diversity, Pam created the first automated Talent Bank, which services both the public and private sectors. Pam's administrative support responds to agency needs for qualified referrals on demand.

Captain Al Nani of the Rhode Island Army National Guard is on a special assignment by Major General Reginald Centracchio. He is a graduate of RIC in Journalism and holds a law degree. Captain Nani directs **Project Military Recruit** one of a few military programs, which uses diversity programs to recruit military forces. It is distinguishable from other programs. It employs "partnerships" with other state agencies to accomplish their mission.

Captain Nani explains the benefits of the military, as supplemental or full time employment to applicants who may have a personal interest or who may have children, relatives, or friends who have an interest in:

- Competitive salaries
- Attractive and generous benefit packages
- Flexible scheduling
- Certification and Training Opportunities
- Pension Opportunity

For more information contact **Captain Al Nani @ HROD, (401) 222-3900.**


IRS Needs Volunteers

The Internal Revenue Service needs volunteers to help taxpayers prepare their federal and state income tax returns.

VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) is an IRS Taxpayer Education Program designed to assist taxpayers who file basic tax returns and cannot afford professional help.

The IRS is looking for individuals who have an aptitude for, or experience in tax preparation and who enjoy working with people. A free, three to five day training course is offered in January.

If you are interested in the VITA program, please call the IRS Taxpayer Education Office in Hartford, CT at (860) 756-4651. Or, write to: IRS, TPEC, 135 High St. Stop 116, Hartford, CT 06103.



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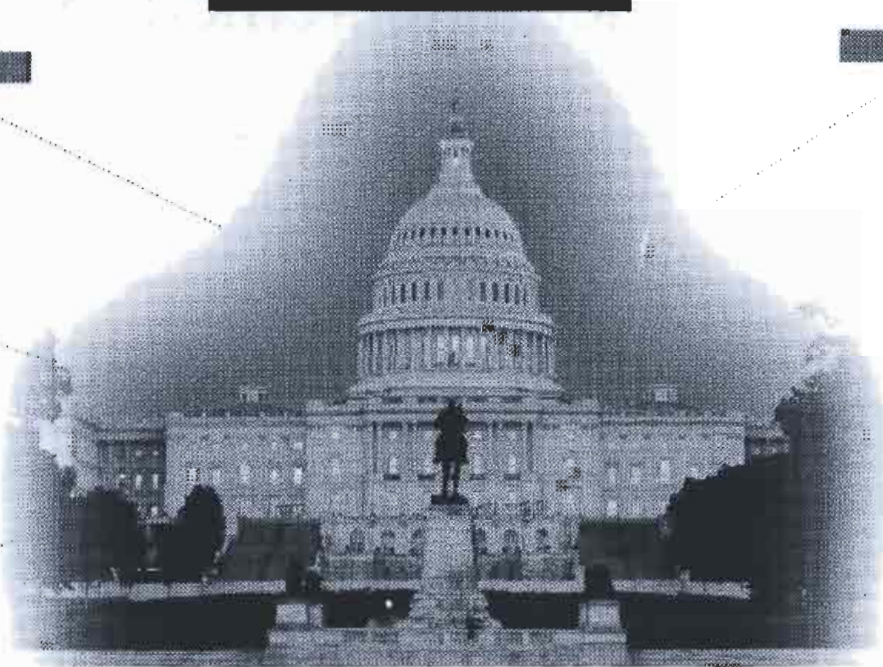
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pRide in performance

Chief of Employee Benefits Retires



Brian E. Keeler, Chief of Employee Benefits since 1992, is retiring on September 8, 2000, after 28 years in State Service.

Keeler brought to the job of Chief of Employee Benefits, a lifetime of experience in healthcare and employee benefits management.

A native of the State of New York, his career in benefit management began, oddly enough, right here in Providence in 1967, when he accepted a position as Assistant Group Supervisor with Aetna Life and Casualty. Later, he became Group Claim Manager for Aetna in Washington, D.C.

Returning to Rhode Island in 1974, Keeler entered State Service as an Assistant Chief of Health Insurance in the Department of Health (DOH). Later, he progressed to Chief of the Health Insurance Plan (CHIP), the State funded health insurance program that covered medical expenses incurred after insurance benefits are exhausted.

In 1985, Keeler accepted a promotion to Chief of Health Insurance in the Department of Human Services where he continued the CHIP program, and assumed additional responsibilities including that of Chief State Negotiator for the Rhode Island Prospective Hospital Reimbursement Program, a legislative cooperative effort designed to negotiate all hospital operating budgets in advance of spending.

Keeler remained at DHS until March, 1991, when the unthinkable happened: Keeler became a victim of the State's reduction in force, and for the first time in his life, he was out of a job. He remained on the Preferred Reemployment List until March, 1992, when he was rehired to fill the vacant position of Chief of Employee Benefits, an event that he considers, "nothing short of a miracle", since he rated his chances of returning to State Service as "nil".

From the start, Keeler saw his mission as one concerned with cost containment — keeping the lid on the ever-rising cost of employee health care benefits.

One obvious approach to rising health care costs is minimizing rate increase demands through successful negotiations with health care providers. The other, is to devise ways to achieve cost reductions without sacrificing existing benefits. This two-pronged approach to cost containment, he now acknowledges, placed him, "in a veritable mine field."

At the outset, Keeler believed that the State of Rhode Island was generous to its workers, and that State employees enjoyed a long list of benefits, many of which, were not generally available to government workers in other states. The cost of health care programs alone for the State of Rhode Island in 1992 was approximately one hundred million dollars a year.

With annual expenditures of this magnitude, the possibility of reducing health care costs by negotiating rate increases

directly with health care providers assumed enormous importance, where a fraction of a percentage point either way, can translate into hundreds of thousands in additional costs or savings.

To pursue this approach, Keeler established procedures for direct rate increase negotiations with health carriers. This practice has resulted in obtaining rates that are consistently lower than those offered the commercial and business community.

Several new benefit plans were established during Keeler's tenure, including Dependent Day Care, a Short Term Disability plan which allows employees to pay for certain benefits on a pre-tax basis, and a Cafeteria Plan.

But the achievement of which he is most proud, is the working relationship with the State's unions through a labor/management benefits committee. For the first time, the State and labor worked together to develop a health plan which met the needs of employees while achieving budgetary savings for the State.



Brian Keeler at the summit of Boot Spur Mountain, in the White Mountains of New Hampshire.

Brian and his wife Grace are outdoor enthusiasts, and are looking forward to spending more time gardening, biking, hiking, fishing, skiing and travelling. Good luck, good health, and enjoy your retirement!

EDITORS NOTE:

As readers of **pRide** know, the production costs of our newsletters are underwritten by our sponsors, the healthcare carriers and other benefit providers whose ads appear in the newsletters. **pRide** has no budget, and not one cent of public funds are expended in its production.

During his tenure as Chief of Employee Benefits, Brian Keeler has been a dauntless booster of **pRide**, and an indefatigable worker in negotiating newsletter sponsorships from among our benefit providers. Without his enthusiastic support, there would have been many blank spaces in our publishing schedule.

Thanks Brian for all your efforts on behalf of **pRide**.

— DJB

(pRide in performance, continued next page)

(continued from page 3)

Robert Plante Honored with Prestigious Award



Robert A. Plante, associate director for human resource management at the Rhode Island Department of Mental Health, Retardation and Hospitals, has been selected to receive the International Personnel Management Association's Charles S. Cushman Award.

The prestigious award honors a member of IPMA's Eastern Region who has made an outstanding and lasting contribution to the field of public health resource administration. The award was established as a tribute to Mr. Cushman, a former director of personnel for the State of Rhode Island for his contributions to the field of personnel management. Cushman also was chairman of IPMA's Eastern region and president of the Public Personnel Association.

Since the early 1980's when Plante took the position at MHRH, he has worked to update the operations of human resource management, providing leadership to promote the best research and information to respond to every aspect of MHRH. Early on, he insisted on state-of-the-art computer systems to provide the best and latest information to support the division.

He has been a champion of Equal Opportunity, and designed a proactive program to recruit under-represented groups into MHRH's work force.

He established an award-winning Disability Management Program that has reduced on the job injuries dramatically and cut compensation costs in half. The worker-friendly program focuses on prevention as well as rapid return-to-work.

Last year, Plante forged a working partnership with AFSCME's State Council and its locals that represent MHRH employees. The partnership serves as an on-going forum for discussion and resolution of common issues. Employees involvement teams resolve specific workplace issues and promote positive labor/management relations.

Plante oversaw many innovative initiatives, and was the first in RI to establish an on-site day care program for MHRH employees and neighboring communities.

A 15-year member of the Human Resource Division of the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors, he served as chair in the mid-90's. He has been a member of several human resource Blue Ribbon committees for the National Institutes of Mental Health.

Plante has been in the lead and at the center of a great transition in Rhode Island's Human Resource Management system, and his efforts have fostered change that has benefited the personnel system and its employees.

Rhode Island Lottery Receives Award

For the third consecutive year, the Rhode Island Lottery has been awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting (CAFR), as determined by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) of the United States and Canada. This Certificate is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting that can be achieved.

The GFOA Review Committee, comprised of experts in the field of financial reporting, auditing, and governmental accounting, is responsible for the indepth review of the financial reports submitted. The Committee determined that the Lottery's report again met the high standards of the CAFR Program, including demonstrating a constructive "spirit of full disclosure" to clearly communicate its financial story.

The Rhode Island Lottery is the only State Agency to have received this award.

* * *

State Employees Help Recruit Voters

Several of Rhode Island's state employees have joined a statewide non-partisan initiative to fight voter apathy and encourage more Rhode Islanders to vote in the upcoming November 7th election.

Leading the initiative is the Democracy Compact — a group of 40 diverse grassroots, policy, media and corporate organizations from across Rhode Island who are dedicated to making Rhode Island the most voting state in the country and a model for American democracy. This year the Compact's primary objective will be to recruit 75,000 new voters to go to the polls in November.

Nationally there is growing concern regarding America's steady four-decade decline in voter participation. This decline in participation crosses gender, ethnic and generational lines. The problem is particularly severe among young voters — only 11% of America's young people under the age of 20 voted in 1996. In Rhode Island over 80% of eligible voters are registered, but less than half actually voted in the 1996 election.

The Democracy Compact feels that here in Rhode Island we have a unique opportunity to address this national problem on a local level and reverse the downward trend in citizen participation here at home and serve as a model for the rest of the country. This non-partisan effort will include an intensive education and outreach campaign to get Rhode Islanders to vote and to do so in a smart and thoughtful way.

The Compact is sponsoring 150 Democracy Fellows who will each recruit at least 25 Democracy Captains, who will in turn each recruit 20 new voters to pledge to vote on November 7th. Training schools and campaign materials will be provided to assist captains in their efforts. The Compact's goal is to saturate the state with information about the importance of voting.

(Continued on page 8)

"El Tour De Tucson"

On November 18, 2000, Alice Dzen Gross, Ed.D., will be cycling "El Tour de Tucson". This 100 mile bike ride is a fundraiser for the Lymphoma and Leukemia Society of America.

Dr. Gross, a former Assistant Dean of University College at the University of Rhode Island for eight years, and a Community Services Coordinator at DCYF for ten years, will be participating in the Tucson event to raise awareness of this disease.

Her husband, Ira Gross, recently retired from the Psychology faculty after 33 years at the University of Rhode Island, has been diagnosed with stage four of non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma.

Funds raised at the Tucson 100-mile bike ride will be used to assist in researching that disease which is currently untreatable.

Alice Dzen Gross is asking for your support in reaching her goal of raising \$4,000.

Please contribute as generously as you can to this important cause.

Please make all checks payable to **Leukemia and Lymphoma Society** and send them to her at the following address:

**Alice Dzen Gross
88 Springdale Drive
Kingston, RI 02881**

All contributions are tax deductible.

Thank you for your support of her efforts on behalf of this worthy cause.

OTD Training Courses

Fall 2000

		Fee
Sept.		
19	Stereotyping and Diversity	\$ 50
20	Building Positive Work Relationships	80
21	IV Therapy: Back to Basics	80
25	Intro to Access	65
Oct.		
2	Intro to Windows 95	65
3 & 4	Intro to Microsoft Word	110
5	Geriatric Mental Health	60
6	Assertive Training	80
12	Making Work Work	80
14	ACLS (Advanced Cardiac Life Support)	160
16	How to Search the World Wide Web	40
19	Intro to Microsoft Excel	110
20	Intermediate Microsoft Excel	110
27	Effective Writing (includes textbook)	98
30	Intro to Access	65
Nov.		
1	Developing Personal Leadership Skills	80
6	Intro to Windows 95	65
6	Leadership in Nursing	25
8	Intro to Powerpoint	65
14 & 15	Intro to Microsoft Word	110

Note: Copies of the OTD catalog of training courses are now available from your department's Human Resource Office or Training Office.

Mentors Needed

Could You Help Guide a Woman to a New Beginning?

Women's Prison Mentoring Program

Female mentors are needed for women preparing to leave prison and rejoin the community. These women are carefully screened and motivated to make their transition a successful one. They truly benefit from having a mentor who will encourage and support them as they prepare to reestablish their lives in the community. You can help by sharing your experiences and advice. If you can spend one hour a week assisting a woman in reaching her goals, please call **Judith Fox** at **462-3161**.

**Mentors from ALL backgrounds are welcome
Minorities are encouraged to apply**

For more information please call:

Judith B. Fox, Coordinator, Women's Mentoring Program
Box 8312, Cranston, RI 02920
401-462-3161

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- **I Bonds will usually increase in value every month,** and interest is compounded semiannually.
- **I Bonds are liquid** and can be turned into cash anytime after six months. And remember, buying I bonds goes a long way toward solving the biggest problem all investors face: finding a way to save that guarantees that inflation won't eat away the value of their savings. For example, if inflation averages only 2½ percent, in just 10 years it will take \$1.28 to equal today's dollar. That means your savings would have to earn 2½ percent to stay even. Because I Bonds pay a rate of return over and above changes in the Consumer Price Index for all Urban consumers (CPI-U), you'll always keep up.

The State Employees U.S. Savings Bonds Payroll Savings Campaign may be over for this year, but you can sign-up to buy I Bonds through your payroll savings plan anytime. See your payroll officer in your department or agency. Start saving today!

Promotion of a Diverse State Government Workforce

Executive Order — 00-4 April 7, 2000

Whereas, Rhode Island state government is committed to fostering a competitive and diverse workforce composed of highly skilled and capable employees through the recruitment, training, retention, and promotion of qualified men and women from diverse racial, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds as well as individuals with disabilities; and

Whereas, It is in the best interests of business and government to create an open, inclusive and equitable human resources paradigm that capitalizes on workforce excellence and the strength of individual differences; and

Whereas, The State's affirmative action and equal opportunity program reports indicate a compelling governmental need for further diversification of the state workforce to reflect and effectively serve the increasingly diverse population of Rhode Island; and

Whereas, The Rhode Island General Assembly has indicated, by statute, a compelling interest in promoting equal opportunity for all in the State workforce; and

Whereas, Significant employee turnover in state government is projected over the next five years; and

Whereas, The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that the majority of new workers in the labor market will be minorities and women.

Now, therefore, I, Lincoln C. Almond, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of Rhode Island hereby order as follows:

1. The State of Rhode Island shall begin a focused initiative to move state government toward a business case for equity with an emphasis on building a competitive and diverse workforce where the best and most qualified individuals are hired into state government positions.

2. Within the State's Office of Personnel Administration in the Department of Administration, an Office of Outreach and Diversity shall be established to:

a) Develop more strategic and focused recruitment and retention programs designed to build a more qualified and diverse workforce;

b) Further develop a partnership with the Department of Labor and Training to formalize a focused recruitment and tracking initiative for individuals who are interested in state employment;

c) Develop strategic partnerships with community-based organizations to strengthen and support recruitment and outreach activities;

d) Become a resource for private sector companies and other city and state departments who desire access to qualified job candidates.

3. A Management Development Institute shall be established within the Office of Training and Development in the Department of Administration that will implement specific training programs for mid-level and senior managers.

4. Plans shall be developed for State internships, fellowships, mentoring, and volunteer opportunities.

This Executive Order incorporates by reference Executive Order 96-14, which promotes equal opportunity by state government and state and federal affirmative action and discrimination laws and regulations, referenced therein.

This Executive Order becomes effective immediately on the date hereof.

So Ordered:

LINCOLN C. ALMOND
Governor

April 7, 2000

State Employees Help Recruit Voters

(Continued from page 6)

Active as Democracy Fellows representing the government sector are **Jane Hayward**, **Sherry Campanelli**, **Olga Noguera**, and **Molly Soum** of the Department of Human Services; **A. Kathryn Power** and **Kathleen Spangler** of the Department of Mental Health, Retardation and Hospitals and **Toby Ayers** and **Anna Tucker** of the Rhode Island Commission on Women. In addition, many other state employees have joined the effort as Democracy Captains. However, additional help is still needed. If you wish to participate in this effort as a Democracy Captain, or simply wish to fill out a Pledge to Vote form, feel free to contact the campaign's coordinator for the government sector, **Jane Hayward**, Deputy Director of the Department of Human Services, at 462-5274.